We Claim:

1. A gas/liquid contacting apparatus, comprising,

   a) an upwardly extending column having an interior comprising, an upper section, a gas/liquid permeable, gas/liquid contacting, intermediate section, and a lower, liquid collecting section,

   b) liquid inlet means to, and gas outlet means from, the upper section,

   c) liquid outlet means from, and gas inlet means to, the lower section, and

   d) an entrained substance depleting, gas distributing assembly in the lower section, the assembly comprising,

      i) a gas conveying duct connected to the gas inlet and having an interior that decreases in cross section from downstream from the gas inlet, the duct extending around at least a major portion of the lower section, and having entrained substance depleted gas outlets, at spaced positions therealong, from inner, upwardly extending wall portions thereof, and entrained substance concentrate gas outlets, at spaced portions therealong, from inner, downwardly extending lower wall portions thereof, and

      ii) for each entrained substance depleted gas outlet, an entrained substance depleted gas deflector for directing gas flow from that gas outlet inwardly and upwardly in the lower section, and

iii) for each entrained substance concentrate gas `outlet an entrained substance concentrate gas deflector for directing entrained substance containing gas flowing from the entrained substance concentrate gas outlet towards a lower portion of the lower section.

2. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the entrained substance concentrate gas outlets are spaced along the duct at positions between the entrained substance depleted gas outlets.

3. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gas conveying duct is divided into two lengthwise extending portions by being connected at an intermediate position therealong to the gas inlet, with the duct interior decreasing in cross-section in both duct portions from the gas inlet, and the entrained substance depleting, gas distributing assembly further comprises a flow splitter for splitting the flow of gas entering the duct into gas streams for both duct portions.

4. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the gas conveying duct comprises a base wall extending inwardly from, and around, at least a portion of an inner side of the column, a top wall spaced above the base wall and extending inwardly from and around, the inner side of the column, with the inner, upwardly extending wall portion inclining downwardly from an inner edge of the top wall, towards the center of the lower section, and the inner,

downwardly extending wall portion inclining upwardly from the level of the base wall to a lower edge of the inner, upper wall portion.

5 Apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the inner, upwardly extending wall portion comprises a series of plates with inverted V-shaped gaps between adjacent plates forming the entrained substance depleted gas outlets, and the inner, downwardly extending wall portion comprises a series of plates with V-shaped gaps between adjacent plates forming the entrained substance concentrate gas outlets.

6. Apparatus according to claim 4, wherein each entrained substance depleted gas deflector comprises an upwardly extending triangular plate joined by an upper sloping side to an upstream side of an inner, upwardly extending wall portion, and by a lower sloping side to a downstream side of an inner, downwardly extending wall portion and each entrained substance concentrate gas deflector comprises an upwardly extending triangular plate joined by an upper sloping side to a downstream side of an inner, upwardly extending wall portion and by a lower sloping side wall to an upstream side of an inner, downwardly extending wall portion.

7. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the entrained substance depleted gas deflectors and the entrained substance concentrate gas deflectors are curved to sweep entrained substance depleted gas or entrained substance concentrate gas towards their respective outlets.

8. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the duct extends along a circular path.

9. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the entrained substance depleted gas outlets and the entrained substance concentrate gas outlets are gas flow constricting outlets.